Mr. M. P. Cherian.—He was not the seniormost man in the 60 to 80 grade at that time.

Mr. K. Ayyappan.—Then why was he appointed?

Mr. M. P. Cherian—Applications were invited and he was found to be the best man available for that post.

Mr. K. Ayyappan.—How was he found to be the best man?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—The Diwan interviewed with every one of the applicants. They were summoned to the Huzur and the Diwan interviewed every one of them and he was found to be the best man for executive work.

Mr. K. Ayyappan.—That he was a member of an unrepresented community was not one of the considerations of the Government.

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—I have not seen anything on record to that effect. I think it would naturally have been one of the reasons.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—May I know, Sir, whether the Government has not exercised this preferential treatment in the matter of promotions also. The answer is given that preferential treatment is shown only as regards appointments. Are there not instances of our Government having preferred members of backward communities in the matter of promotions also?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—Does the Member mean that after they have entered the service?

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—Yes.

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—I want notice.

Bridge over the canal in the accretion lands at Edavanakkad.

309. Mr. Paul Mampilli.—Will the Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether there is any bridge over the north to south canal in the accretion lands at Edavanakkad;

(b) are not the Government aware that people of the locality are put to great hardship for want of a bridge over the canal?

Mr. P. V. Raphael.—(a) No.

(b) There is not great hardship.

Vernacular Education Committee's Report.

310. Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—Will the Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Vernacular Education Committee has finished its labours;

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(b) whether a report has been submitted by the Committee;

(c) will the said report be placed on the Council table;

(d) whether the report when it is made will be made available for consideration by the Council before the Government passes orders on the same?

Mr. I. N. Menon.—(a) No.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise in view of answer to (b).

(d) The point will be considered after the report is received.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—How long was this committee at work?

Rama Varmha Tampuran. It has been functioning for more than a year.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—Is it not more than two years?

Rama Varmha Tampuran—I do not exactly remember the period.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—What exactly is the reason for this delay in the submission of their report?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—There is no special reason. They have not finished their enquiry. They are still visiting some schools. They have not collected all the data they think necessary for submitting their recommendations.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—When can we expect the report?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—According to the latest report I think they will be able to submit the report towards the end of this year.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—With regard to subdivision (d) whether the report will be made available for consideration by this Council it is stated that the point will be considered after the report is received. May I know what the report has to do with the question whether it could be made available for discussion in this House?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—To know whether that report requires any special consideration by this Council. All the orders passed by the Government are not after a discussion in the Council. Therefore unless there is any special necessity for it why should it be placed before the Council?

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—Does not the Government think that the report of a committee on Vernacular education is worthy of being considered by the representatives of the people?

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Rama Varmha Tampuran.—Government do not say that it will not be worthy. A more accurate answer will be to say that the question will be decided finally after the report is received. Therefore that answer is given.

Salt Contract.

311. Mr. P. Krishna Menon.—Will the Government be pleased to state—

(a) the price the Government have agreed to pay to the present contractor for supply of salt;

(b) for how many years is the present contract to run;

(c) what was the rate agreed to by the Government with the previous contractor (lower or higher than the present rate);

(d) will the difference result in loss or gain to the Government if the selling price is left as it was before;

(e) have the Government any intention to vary the selling price?

Mr. M. P. Cherian.—(a) The salt purchased is of two kinds, called Jada and barras. The prices in 1109 and 1110 are Rs. 63 per 100 mds. of Jada and Rs. 62 per 100 mds. of barras.

(b) During the years 1109 and 1110.

(c) Rs. 58—4—0 per 100 mds. of Jada and
Rs. 56—4—0 do Barras.
They were lower than the present rate.

(d) The cost price of salt in the previous year was Re. 0—9—2 per maund, while this year it is Re. 0—10—0 per maund. Salt was sold at the rate of Rs. 2—5—0 per maund including duty and other charges in 1108. In this year also, salt is sold at the same rate. Deducting duty and cost price, the Government was getting a margin of Re. 0—2—10 in 1108 towards incidental charges. This year, the receipt under this head is only Re. 0—2—0 per maund. The Government therefore has had to forgo ten pies on every maund of salt sold. Granting that the quantity of salt sold in 1109 will not be less than that of 1108, the shortage in revenue thus caused comes to about Rs. 15,000—0—0.

(e) No. Considering the present economic depression the Government did not think it advisable to raise the selling price of salt.

Mr. P. Krishna Menon.—So in the matter of salt revenue the Government is forgoing the amount of Rs. 15,000 in the interest of the people?

Mr. M. P. Cherian.—Yes.

Duty on indigenous Sugar.

312. Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Will the Government be pleased to state whether their attention has been

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